2:Shryock H-4, 5 (no date)1931 AF14 Central China AF14

different gods is very much the same — I am speaking of indigenous deities chiefly — but the times differ, and the principal festival of each cult is on the birthday of its god. The temples may or may not have special services on the great Chinese feast days, like the Ch'ing Ming, the Dragon Boat Festival, the Middle of the Seventh Month and the Mid Autum Festival. Each god has his special functions but there are no patent rights, and almost anyone may be petitioned for children, for example. The essential elements in worship seem to be prayer, bowing or prostration, incense and candles. The various offerings, none of which are always present, will be mentioned later.

A god manifests himself in various ways. Frequently he appears in visions and dreams. He may answer prayer in a natural way, as when a swarm of locusts is eaten by birds and frogs. He may inspire men to work together for a common end, or move an individual to sacrifice himself for the general good. Unusual natural phenomena of almost any kind show the presence of a god or indicate his will. Such are thunder and lightning, the flight of birds, floods, plague and drought. Another way is to sacrifice and then use various devices for telling fortunes, like drawing lots, or observing the position in which two curved sticks fall. The natural explanation of eclipses has been known since early times, and I do not know of any use made of the organs of animals in determining the future. The ancients used tortoise shells. In general, anything which seems to be beyond the control of man is held to show the power of some god, provided the occurrence is irregular enough to attract attention. When prayer is unanswered the god is either angry or impotent.

This investigation is in general limited to those gods who are found in the temples of Anking. Little will be said, therefore, about divinities like the Kitchen-God, or the peculiar cults of other localities, such as the worship of T'ien Hou in the province of Fukien. Then there are other gods, like Shang Ti, whose worship was the prerogative of the emperor, and whose temples are found only in Peking. In Anking I have been unable to find any temple god whose activities were unmistakably malevolent, so that although